

Hurworth Primary School

Westfield Drive, Hurworth, Darlington, County Durham, DL2 2ET

Inspection dates 11–12 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils have extremely good reading skills because of the excellent groundwork done in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the stress given to reading across the curriculum in every classroom.
- The attainment and progress of pupils are high compared to national averages at both Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is good because lessons stimulate the interest of pupils.
- Pupils wear their uniform with pride and carry this over to their work in books, which is usually very neat and tidy.
- Pupils behave very well and have good manners because teachers have high expectations.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. This is confirmed by parents, teachers and in the evidence collected by inspectors.
- The new headteacher has already made rapid improvements in the quality of teaching in school. He has built a very effective team of people around him to improve the school further, with dedicated teachers, teaching assistants and parent volunteers.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' writing skills are not as well developed as reading. In particular, there are weaknesses in how well pupils write sentences and use punctuation.
- When books are marked pupils do not always get enough guidance on how to improve their work further.
- In a few lessons, the most able pupils could be set even harder work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 15 lessons or parts of lessons taught by seven different teachers. Four joint observations took place between the inspection team and senior members of staff. The headteacher, along with an inspector, also looked at the quality of pupils' work in books.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about how much reading they do, as well as looking at their work in class.
- Discussions took place with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils.
- Documents were examined, including those relating to safeguarding, the school's improvement plan, records of the school's checks on teaching and learning, as well as its own assessment data.
- The views of 41 parents, who responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), were also taken into account. The inspection team also spoke to 13 parents before the school started and one parent contacted the inspection team by e-mail. Seventeen members of staff completed questionnaires about their view of the school.

Inspection team

Frank Cain, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Colin Scott

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hurworth is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, children from service families, and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is slightly below average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- Hurworth Primary School converted to become an academy school on 1 June 2012. When its predecessor school, Hurworth Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- There have been significant changes to the senior leadership since September 2013.
- The present executive headteacher is also headteacher of Heathfield Primary School and he has supported the leadership of two other schools in Darlington.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement and increase the amount of teaching that is outstanding by:
 - allowing pupils time to follow up on teachers' advice on how their work might be improved
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across all subjects, especially in accurate sentence construction and punctuation
 - giving more time and opportunity for the most able pupils to make even more progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When children enter the school, their skills are as typically expected for their age.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are extremely knowledgeable about the sounds that letters make (phonics). One able child demonstrated this when he read 'At the weekend I went to a football match,' out loud to his friends. Others busied themselves writing sentences such as, 'My dad is a cook.'
- Many children make the equivalent of one and a half year's progress during their year in the Reception class.
- At the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils' attainment is significantly above average, apart from in writing. In reading by Year 6, pupils are close to being a year ahead of pupils elsewhere. Their progress is also higher than nationally in both reading and mathematics.
- There was a gap in 2013 between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils in the school, equivalent to two terms in reading and mathematics, and one term in writing. However, it is necessary to be careful when analysing only one year's results because the number of pupils is so small. In 2012, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals performed as well as others in English and far better in mathematics. The school's information shows that in 2014 these pupils are on track to outperform other pupils in all areas.
- In the scrutiny of pupils' work, there were no gaps in the progress being made by groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals. All were making good progress.
- The most able pupils do well in the end of key stage tests and assessments, although in a small number of instances, inspection evidence in lessons showed that they could do even better by being given even more challenging work.
- Reading is a particular strength across the school because teachers promote reading, as well as pupils' mathematical skills very well. Good development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is evident, for example, in science and mathematics lessons.
- A love of learning is evident across the school. One Year 2 pupil said she wanted to read well so that 'when I have children I can read to them'. By Year 6, pupils read a wide range of books and read out loud confidently.
- The attainment of disabled pupils or with special educational needs is good and they make far better progress than similar pupils nationally, apart from in writing. This mirrors the progress of other pupils in the school.
- The school realises that writing skills are not taught as successfully as they should be, in particular, in pupils' use of punctuation and in the construction of grammatically correct sentences across all subjects of the curriculum.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity for all of its pupils well overall.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers are enthusiastic and very little time is wasted in lessons in getting the pupils down to work. Pupils have targets to achieve in lessons and these are written down by pupils, covered in plastic and used as bookmarks to remind pupils how well they should be achieving.
- In a Year 5 science lesson, pupils were challenged to explore which liquid is best to dissolve sugar crystals. Teachers expected all pupils to concentrate well and think clearly, and their good subject knowledge ensured that pupils established a theory first and then tested this out by experiments.
- Most pupils strongly agree that their work is challenging. A Year 2 class were doing multiplication and division exercises, normally done much later in many schools. The teacher kept a close eye on the progress of all pupils so that they were successful at this higher level work. Only

occasionally are the most able set work that does not fully extend their learning.

- The curriculum has interesting topics to attract the attention of pupils and a number of pupils in Year 4 were very interested finding out about 'from farm to table', dealing with farming and food production.
- In a Year 4 English lesson, pupils were asked to persuade the organisers of a fictitious 'Children's Olympics' to include a new sport. The teacher was taking full advantage of the Winter Olympics to capture the interest of pupils and set work for pupils to achieve well.
- In a French lesson, pupils had to work out a particular winter sport when given its French name. The answers relied partly on pupils' past knowledge of the language and picture clues.
- Other adults support pupils' learning very well. They make sure that the pupils understand what to do and ask appropriate questions to make them think, such as 'Why did that happen?' Teaching assistants also help in assessing how well individual children are learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Parent helpers assist very effectively by getting children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to read out loud and practise their phonic knowledge, including those who are most able.
- Pupils' books are marked frequently and good work is rightly praised, but there are relatively few examples of teachers informing pupils how their work could be improved and actually getting pupils to make those improvements and so learn more effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are very attentive in class and are keen to participate in lessons. In an excellent music lesson, involving three classes, pupils demonstrated by taking part enthusiastically, how much they loved school. At the same time, they were learning about their history and local culture through songs about the railway builders in the nineteenth century.
- Pupils say there is no bullying, but a very small number said they were called silly names and one said some pupils pull faces and talk when the teacher is talking. However, there have been no serious incidents and no exclusions in the last two and a half years. Inspection evidence confirmed that behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and often very good.
- Pupils are very happy in school and greet visitors with a polite 'hello'. All parents in the questionnaire said their children are happy at school and are looked after well.
- During lunchtime, even the very youngest children are expected to clear away their plates and cutlery, which they do carefully and sensibly. The school encourages pupils to take on jobs and responsibility extremely well.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and parents support this view. Pupils know about the dangers they might face when using computers because 'teachers have taught us how to be safe on the internet'.
- Pupils understand how to be safe and healthy. A child in the Early Years Foundation Stage working in the construction area had a hard hat and a reflective jacket on. When asked why a yellow the jacket? He said, 'in the dark it glows when cars are coming'.
- Year 1 pupils are able to determine healthy and unhealthy foods. One confidently pointed out that sweets 'are ok as occasional treats'.
- In physical education children in the Reception class were running around excitedly in the hall as fast as they could, but taking great care not to collide with others. On the teacher's instructions, they stood still immediately, as they had been taught extremely well how to behave.
- On the playground pupils are happy and full of energy, but play safely with their friends or in small groups.
- Attendance is broadly average and improving, especially for those pupils who in the past were too often absent.

The leadership and management are good

- The new executive headteacher has in a short space of time, managed to improve the quality of teaching dramatically and he is ambitious to make the school even better.
- Hurworth collaborates very effectively with a neighbouring school, which the executive headteacher also leads. There are some shared staff and collaboration on the moderation of the pupils' work. There are plans to develop a supportive chain of academy schools.
- The management of the school is now shared with leaders of key subjects who help check the quality of teaching and learning in numeracy and literacy across the school. They review how well pupils are doing and hold regular meetings to reflect on the changes that are subsequently requires to further improve pupils' achievement.
- The school has used specialist independent assessors to confirm what the school needs to do to improve.
- Teachers' performance is very well managed and teachers have to achieve targets linked to the number of pupils making the challenging levels of progress.
- The school's view of its own performance is honest and very accurate and the joint lesson observations with the headteacher and members of the inspection team showed that teaching across the school was being accurately assessed.
- An extremely small number of parents did not agree with the statement that the school was well led, but the inspection team specifically questioned parents about this and there were no complaints whatsoever. In fact, there were extremely positive comments, although one parent did ask if they could have more details on the school's future plans.
- The new primary school sport funding is to be used effectively to build a multi-use games area (MUGA). This has generated great interest from pupils, some who are not normally attracted to sport, but are keen to try out new sports, such as basketball.
- Safeguarding meets current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has made an accurate assessment of how well pupils are doing and of the quality of teaching. Despite many being new to the governing body, governors have taken good advice from the headteacher and from another school so that they can, and now do, confidently and effectively challenge the school. They have set the headteacher a challenging target linked to improving the quality of teaching further. Governors analyse the school's performance evidence carefully, including checking the impact of the pupil premium funding. They understand that teachers' rewards and career progression are to be closely matched to performance in the classroom.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138180
Local authority	Darlington
Inspection number	431322

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Fitzgerald
Headteacher	Nick Blackburn
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01325 720028
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